

From MARAD's North Atlantic Region—

Largest Anti-Terrorism Exercise Ever Held in the United States

By Bill McDonald

Top Officials 3 (TOPOFF 3), the third in a series of exercises intended to strengthen the nation's capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from large-scale terrorist attacks, was held in the North Atlantic Region from April 4 to 8. This \$16 million, week-long, full-scale, anti-terrorism exercise simulated a series of terrorist attacks employing weapons of mass destruction, beginning in Connecticut and New Jersey, and leading to a coordinated national and international response.

The North Atlantic Region Office participated in the exercise, which was designed to gauge how quickly and effectively emergency personnel can respond to attacks employing chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. Region Office participation included preparation and communication of reports to MARAD Headquarters on exercise events, participation in briefings and discussions on real-world as well as simulated TOPOFF 3 developments, and field inspection tours of medical response operations at the Rutgers University campus and the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

In Connecticut, federal officials staged a simulated chemical weapons explosion in the Port of New London. The New Jersey mock attack involved the dispersal of simulated biological agents.

Emergency responders conducted search and rescue operations, and hospitals simulated care to attack victims to enable experts to analyze the public health system's capacity to deal with this type of emergency. Mock media coverage of the exercise prepared key decision makers to face the challenges of real world media communications in the event of an actual attack.

More than 10,000 participants representing more than 200 federal, state, and local government agencies, the private sector, and volunteer groups took part, together with senior security representatives from England and Canada.

AAPA Names Secretary Mineta as 2005 "Port Person of the Year"



Secretary Mineta receiving the 2005 Port Person of the Year award from AAPA Chairman of the Board Gary LaGrange of the Port of New Orleans

The American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA), the organization representing public ports throughout the Western Hemisphere, selected U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta as its Port Person of the Year. This is AAPA's most prestigious annual award honoring an individual whose outstanding work or service has made a significant contribution to public port authorities and/or maritime commerce.

Secretary Mineta received the award and served as a luncheon keynote speaker during the Association's annual spring conference that was held in Washington, DC.

Upcoming Events

National Maritime Day Observance

U.S. Navy Memorial

Washington, DC

10:30 A.M.

May 19, 2005

Contact: MARAD Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at (202) 366-5807

National Maritime Day

May 22, 2005

If you know of an upcoming event you would like published in the *MARAD Update*, please submit it to Ella Thomas at ella.thomas@marad.dot.gov.